THE LITERACY MATERIALS
BULLETIN

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Instructors | Tutors | Learners | Administrators | Coordinators | Resource Centres | Learning Centres

Hello and welcome from Richard Van Camp!

This issue celebrates 12 years of publishing excellence from the Literacy Materials Bulletin Committee for learning academies across Canada. That's right! Twenty-four issues and we are still going strong.

I have had the privilege of belonging to the committee for the past two years; during this time, I have felt so inspired by our team of dedicated educators who make up the committee. Our mandate is to find, field-test, review, and recommend materials to be used in the classroom, library, or curriculum that are appropriate to the reading level of basic/fundamental adult learners and are free of bias regarding race and gender.

Working with the committee while teaching at Heiltsuk College in beautiful Bella Bella has not been *work* at all. Receiving CD-ROMs that explore new ways of user-friendly adult learning in the fields of math and English was something new for me, and I am so impressed with the innovative exercises being developed. Heiltsuk College also received atlases, novels, textbooks and videos that we field-tested in our classrooms. Bella Bella, you see, does not have a public library, so we are always happy to receive something that we can use immediately. All materials sent our way to field-test were met with enthusiasm by our staff and students, and we were always eager to see what worked and, most importantly, to find out why certain resources were more successful than others. We do have a library at the college that all students are welcome to use; however, no school can ever have enough resources that are created for the fundamental level. One of our great discoveries this year was the National Adult Literacy Database website **www.nald.ca**. What a treasure for our students who wanted fun exercises for math and English! The satisfaction I felt working with the committee came from the knowledge that while we were testing materials in our classrooms, educators from across BC were doing the same in their schools with their students. What a team!

I can honestly say that what you are reading here and in our back issues are our highest recommendations to you of the finest resources in adult basic/fundamental education. Enjoy! ❑

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Title:	***Writing Made Easy* (1999)**
Author:	**Elizabeth Plett**
Publisher:	The John Howard Society of Manitoba 583 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1Z7 Tel: (204) 775-1514 Fax: (204) 775-1670 Email: office@johnhoward.mb.ca
Website:	www.johnhoward.mb.ca
Available:	Publisher
Price:	$15.00

Writing Made Easy

Reviewed by Ruth Chambers, Instructor

Writing Made Easy is an easy-to-use workbook that provides students with fundamental information on parts of speech. What makes this 148-page book unique is its use of real-life Canadian stories to give students the opportunity to practice their newly learned skills. For example, "Four-Legged Snowmobiles" is about dog sled teams in Canada's northern communities and is used to test students' knowledge of nouns; "Northern Lights," a poem about the aurora borealis, is used for students to practice their skills in adjective usage. The double-spaced stories and poems allow students to identify grammar in context.

There are 29 lessons in the coil-bound book, covering many facets of parts of speech. There are several lessons on nouns: common, proper, pronoun, and possessive. The verb lessons include information on past, present, and future action verbs, linking verbs, and irregular verbs. Numerous lessons on adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and connectives complete the parts of speech data. Each lesson in this soft-covered book starts with a definition and examples of the different parts of speech. Next, students are instructed to read through a short, one-page story or poem and find examples of the just-taught part of speech. Then, students are given the opportunity to write paragraphs or sentences relating to the story or poem, identifying the part of speech covered in that lesson. Thus, each lesson gives students at least three exposures to the new skill: learning the definition, seeing the concept in something they have read, and using and identifying the concept in their own writing.

The structure of this book, with stand-alone lessons, allows instructors to pick and choose which lessons they want to use. The lessons do not need to be taught in chronological order. In addition, the short lessons encourage the introduction of outside current material, such as newspaper articles or short paragraphs, to give students added practice in newly learned skills.

This workbook is not reproducible, but its reasonable price makes the purchase of a class set a manageable acquisition. This book would be a valuable resource for any literacy practitioner. □

SAMPLE PAGE (reduced to 93% of its size)
Excerpt from *Writing Made Easy*, developed by Elizabeth Plett.

LESSON #19

Adjectives

An adjective is a word that describes a noun or a pronoun. The adjective can come ***before*** or ***after*** the word that it is describing. Here are some examples.

Adjectives	*Nouns or Pronouns*	*Sentences*
purple	daisies	Purple daisies are growing.
little	children	Little children need care.
angry	bull	The angry bull charges.
fast	car	There is a fast car.
huge	pizza	That pizza is huge.
tall	she	She is tall.
noisy	it	It is noisy.

EXERCISE #19A

Read the poem on the next two pages. Underline 10 adjectives. Above 5 of these adjectives, write another one that you can think of to describe the same noun or pronoun. See the two examples:

dancing *Light golden*

At this waving play of light Pale yellow lights

John Howard Society of Manitoba, Inc.
1999©

Title: ***The Cremation of Sam McGee* (1986)**
Author: **Robert W. Service; paintings by Ted Harrison**
Publisher: Kids Can Press Ltd.
29 Birch Avenue, Toronto, ON M4V 1E2
Tel: (416) 925-5437 Toll free: 1-800-265-0884 Fax: (416) 960-5437
Email: webmaster@kidscan.com
Website: http://www.kidscanpress.com/
Available: Publisher or your local bookstore
ISBN: 0-919964-92-3
Price: $18.95

The Cremation of Sam McGee

Reviewed by Christina Patterson, Instructor

The Cremation of Sam McGee by Robert W. Service was first published in 1907. Painter Ted Harrison beautifully illustrates the new release of this Canadian classic. The book is large and colourful. The print size is perfect. There is a passage of the poem about every other page. This is an art book. There are no page numbers. There are plenty of pictures to brilliantly depict a frigid Canadian north with gold miners, dog sleds and northern lights.

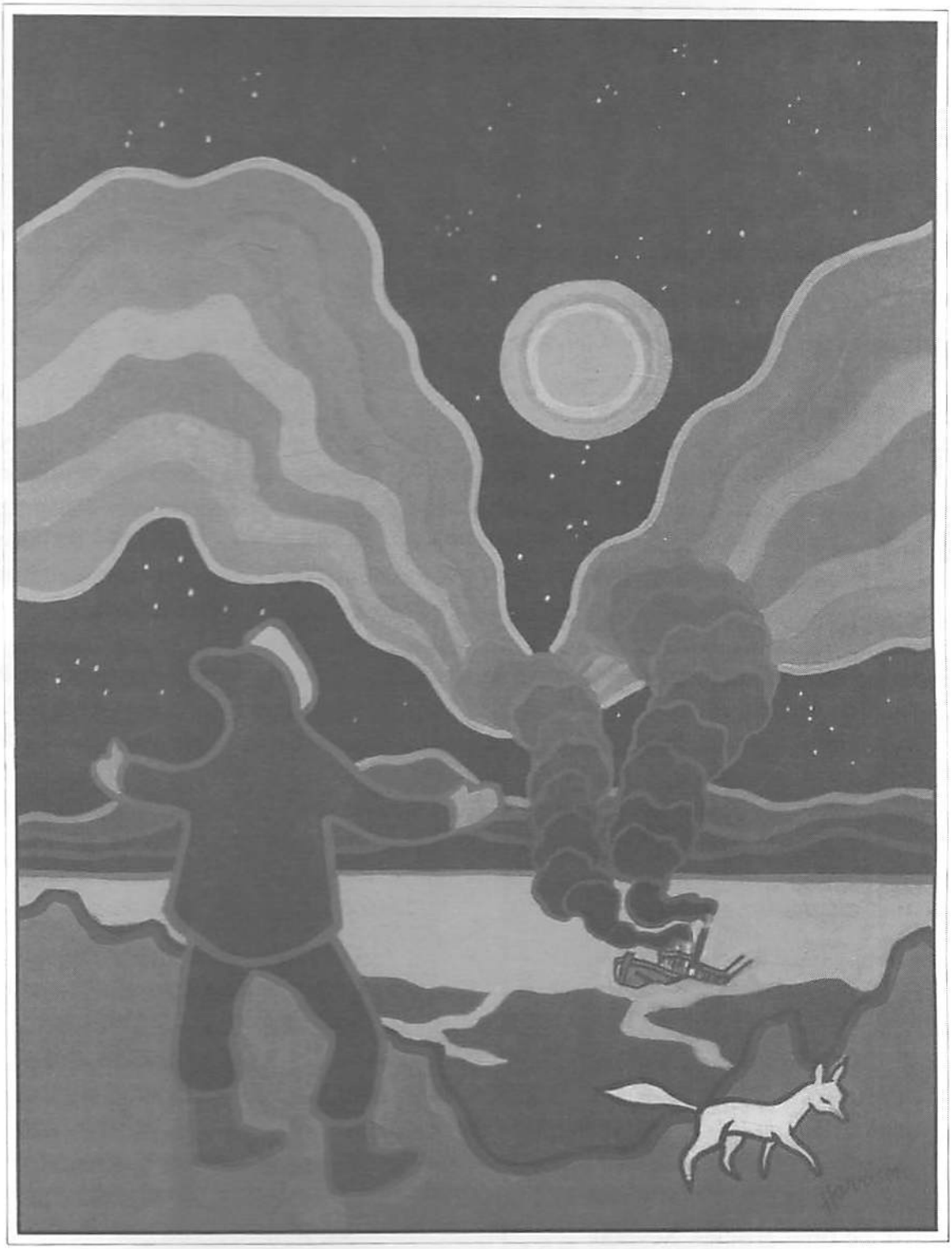
Each painting is accompanied by a written description of the details in the paintings. Often, the description includes 'truths' about life in the north. For example, "The Yukon air is so dry that an old stove exposed to the elements will not easily rust. Often cabins can lie deserted for years with their contents intact and well preserved."

Eight of us read this poem, each person reading one line. Some of the vocabulary is difficult. Words like "hearkened" and "derelict" may need to be explained. It helps to have a couple of students who can read pretty good to keep the rhythm of the poem going. Some of the poem is very easy to read. It's a very funny poem. We laughed out loud. We read the poem two times. The second reading we knew the rhythm better and read with gusto. Later, after we'd talked about the poem, we wrote our own poems and recreated the rhythm from *The Cremation of Sam McGee.*

There is an introduction to the book. Ron Frankson from Heiltsuk College says, "I enjoyed reading Pierre Berton's write up on the first and second page. I started understanding the poem after reading this."

The book is very reasonably priced given that it includes such brilliant, colourful paintings by this popular painter. ❑

SAMPLE PAGE (reduced to 80% of its size)
Selection from *The Cremation of Sam McGee* by Robert W. Service and illustrated by Ted Harrison, used by permission of Kids Can Press, Ltd., Toronto. Illustration copyright © 1986 by Ted Harrison.



Title:	***Why Are You Calling Me LD?* (1997)**
Author:	**Holly Parzych**
Publisher:	PCI Educational Publishing P.O. Box 34270, San Antonio, TX 78265-4270. Tel: 1-800-594-4263 Fax: 1-888-259-8284 Email: info@pciatalog.com
Website:	http://www.pciatalog.com/
Available:	Publisher or your local bookstore
ISBN:	15888040879PP
Price:	$31.00

Why Are You Calling Me LD?

Reviewed by Jan Weiten, Instructor

This book garnered both compliments and criticisms during its round of field-testing with students, learning disability specialists, tutors and instructors. Nonetheless, everyone found the book useful and would recommend it to adult or teenage students, with some cautions.

Though its target audience would seem to be young adults (and their parents), we used it successfully with older students. The book has exercises following each topic that reinforce vocabulary and concepts. Though the book can be used independently, this was not the intent of its author, who states, "Discussion and interaction must follow in order to meet its (the book's) purpose."

Everyone commented that it is thorough and provides valuable information to students who don't know about learning disabilities. Several said that there is clear, easy language and accessible vocabulary. One student found it helpful that the book is organized in short selections and liked the activities that accompanied the brief articles. Several learners liked reading about other people who have learning disabilities and who have become successful and even famous. "They never gave up on their dreams." The book encouraged one learner to find out more about her own LD. One practitioner commented that it would be good for learners who have an LD to read this book early, so they can learn advocacy skills for themselves.

A few readers disliked the use of the phrase "LD student" or "being LD." As one practitioner wrote, "I know that's a common way to label, but I'd prefer a less identity-based description [such as, someone with LD.]" One student who is struggling with her own learning disability commented, "It sounds rude to call someone 'LD' as if you're treating that person as strange."

The list of possible causes is introduced with the disclaimer: "No one really knows what causes learning disabilities." Nonetheless, one practitioner questioned the accuracy of the list and a student said that it was "insulting."

But *Why Are You Calling Me LD?* has much to recommend it and would be a useful addition to literacy bookshelves. ❑

PART 9 - WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MYSELF?

Objective: Students will become familiar with steps they can take to emphasize their strengths and deal with their weaknesses.

DIRECTIONS: READ AND LEARN THESE WORDS AND DEFINITIONS.

highlighter	**a marker that produces transparent color; can be used to make a word stand out on a page of text**
learning styles	**different ways of learning; often refers to methods of taking in information**
mechanical speller	**a small computer that can be used to determine correct spellings of words**
mnemonics	**use of letters and/or words as a memory tool**
phonics	**the matching of sounds to letters**
reference papers	**information a person keeps to look at later as needed**
SQ3R	**stands for: survey, question, read, recite, review**

There are many things you can do to help yourself. Some of these things are listed here.

GET TO KNOW YOURSELF

- Be familiar with your strengths.
- Be familiar with your weaknesses.
- Use your strengths to cope with your weaknesses.
- Be familiar with the ways you learn best (study the learning styles chart on page 47).

ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF

- Do things for yourself as much as possible.
- Attend all meetings that pertain to you.
- Ask questions when you don't understand.
- Talk to your teachers about your needs whether it be extra time, help, reading, seat assignment, etc.
- Ask for study guides.

Title: ***Residential Schools: The Stolen Years*** **(1993)**
Author: **Linda Jaine, editor**
Publisher: University Extension Press, Extension Division
Kirk Hall Room 125, University of Saskatchewan
117 Science Place, Saskatoon, SK S7N 5C8
Tel: (306) 966-5565 Fax: (306) 966-5567
Email: u.learn@usask.ca
Website: www.extension.usask.ca
Available: Publisher
ISBN: 0-88880-325-7
Price: $18.00

Residential Schools: The Stolen Years

Reviewed by Richard Van Camp, Instructor and First Nations Resource Member

Residential Schools: The Stolen Years should be in every library, high school, college, university and government centre across Canada. Twenty-six contributors grace this collection describing the impact residential schools had and continue to have on First Nations people. Narratives are told through poetry, an interview, reports, creative non-fiction, and personal essays, while Sarain Stump's artwork complements the writing in this collection perfectly.

Flying Eagle Woman sets the tone of this profound anthology with a short story about her 12-year-old brother, Charlie Wants, who froze to death while trying to escape the Cecilia Jeffrey Residential School in Ontario. Charlie died trying to walk the 700 miles that would take him home in the middle of winter, a trip that had involved a bush plane, a train, and several vehicles.

This is an excellent resource for students at the basic literacy level because the stories are short and told with everyday language and in several genres. On the other hand, due to the volatile nature of the subject matter, instructors should preview this book before offering it to students.

One of our students, Shirley Brown, who read this collection, wrote the following book report about *Residential Schools: The Stolen Years*.

"Residential schools are of the past, yet they still exist here today in the hearts and souls and the spirits of all who were placed in the residential schools. Reading *Residential Schools: The Stolen Years* gave me some understanding of what my parents and others went through. I was able to gather an understanding as to why some First Nations people are silent; they are just learning to speak out. When reading the book, *Residential Schools: The Stolen Years*, it became clear that First Nations dignity, pride, culture, language, and parenting skills were taken away from us; moreover, residential schools took away both their childhood and their opportunity to show love in a family environment. This book was very interesting to me. The poems are so straightforward yet very raw and emotional." ❑

itself.

A Typical Day at St. Henri, as told by Alphonse Little Poplar, No. 22

The wake-up bell came early - 6 a.m. First we had to go to the chapel for Mass so we could receive Absolution before Communion. Then we had breakfast, watery porridge with sugar already stirred in, no milk, and a slab of bread with no grease. Sometimes they would give us peanut butter for the bread. On those days a nun would go around the table with a pail of peanut butter and give each boy a glob of peanut butter on their bread.

Then we went out to do the chores: milk the cows, feed the pigs, get the firewood.

At 9 a.m. we were off to school for classes. In school we did some reading and things like that. Then we would have recess and then break for noon. Dinner was usually soup and one piece of bread with no grease. Sometimes the soup had a sliver of meat and a potato in it. Those were the good days. We would have berries for dessert when they were in season.

We could never help ourselves to anything when we were eating meals. Everything was served by the nuns. There were no seconds. They fed us the way animals were fed, like slopping the pigs. There was an active blackmarket of stolen food ran by those students lucky enough to work in the kitchen. The students would trade between themselves. Sometimes we would fight over food, we would get so hungry.

After dinner it was classes, recess, and then classes again till 4 p.m. After school we would get a dry bun and any food we could steal, beg, buy, or barter.

Then came chores or play, depending on whose turn it was. If it was chores we had to feed the pigs again, milk the cows, weed the garden, or do the dishes. If it was our turn to

Title:	***Grass Roots Readers* (2000), selected titles**		
Author:	**Various**		
Publisher:	Grass Roots Press		
	PO Box 52192, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2T5		
	Toll free: 1-888-303-3213 Fax: 1-780-413-6582		
	Email: grassrt@telusplanet.net		
Website:	www.literacyservices.com		
Available:	Publisher		
ISBN/Price:	*Fran's Story*	1-894593-06-5	$7.90
	The Big Goof	1-894593-03-0	$7.90
	The Hike	1-894593-00-6	$7.90
	Stress	1-894593-05-7	$7.90
	How to Find a Good Used Car	1-894593-07-3	$7.90

Stress, The Big Goof, Fran's Story

Reviewed by Jan Weiten, Instructor

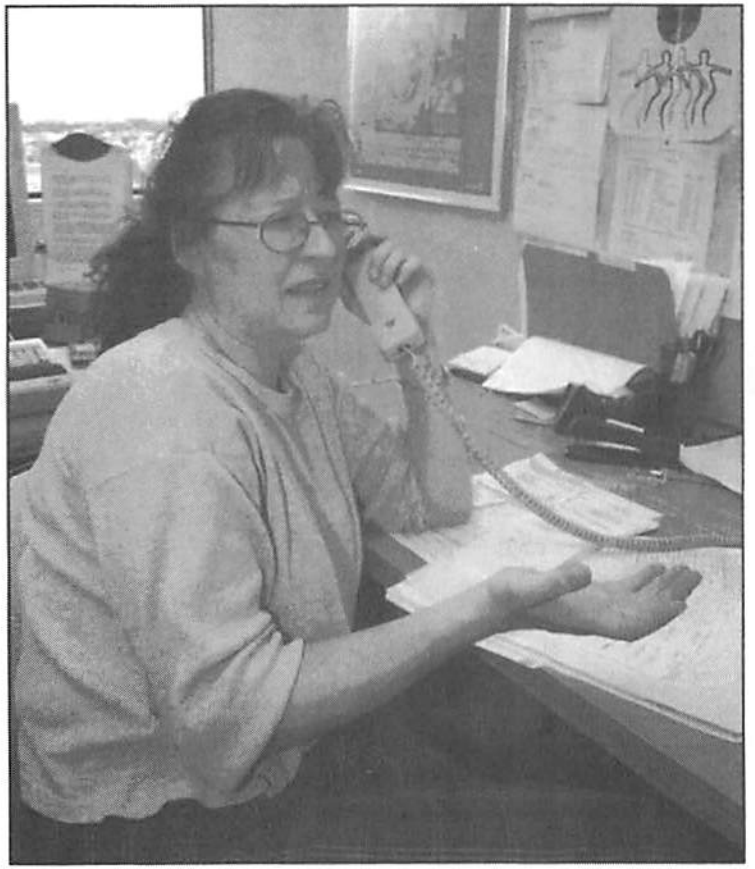
Grass Roots Press has recently published a series of seven basic readers for adults who are learning how to read. These books cover a variety of subjects and range in tone from factual to playful. In the different groups of students who field-tested these books, personal tastes made themselves known! No book was a hands-down favourite. We field-tested five of them. Some readers found *The Hike*, a story of mishaps while hiking in the woods, funny while others found it too unlikely. Some readers found *How To Buy a Good Used Car* very valuable - a good easy-to-read summary of the important things to consider when buying a car. Others felt they already knew this information or they disagreed with the material. The books that seemed to be the most popular among the group of students are *Fran's Story*, *Stress*, and *The Big Goof*.

All of the books have the same format. Each book contains 25 to 30 pages. Almost every page has a clear, black and white photograph with a couple of lines of text under it. The books use very simple language, which makes decoding possible even for beginning learners. This format, along with the adult content, is the most valuable aspect of the series for most learners and instructors. As one instructor said, "Everybody could take a turn reading out loud, and they loved that. Even if they didn't really like the content of a specific book that much, they felt satisfied that they were able to read a whole book from cover to cover." Another instructor pointed out that "Even the better readers enjoyed the simple language in the text, and the fact that there was a limited amount of text on each page. Students enjoyed reading a book where they did not have to struggle with the vocabulary."

Here are short reviews of the three favourites.

(Continued on page 12)

SAMPLE PAGE (reduced to 90% of its size)
Excerpt from *Fran's Story* by Moira Kovats. Reproduced by permission of Grass Roots Press.



I talk to people all day.

Sometimes, people are mean.

My head hurts

when I get off work.

(Continued from page 10)

Fran's Story

Fran, a single parent, has two kids and a job that is very stressful. On her way home from work, she picks up her kids and stops at the store for some milk. When her son acts up in the store, she hits him, and a witness to the scene tells Fran she is going to call the cops. Fran asks herself, "I love my kids. Am I such a bad mom?"

Students generally responded to the story with a sense of recognition and compassion. One learner said, "I think this happens a lot because that single parent is stressed out because they are doing everything by themselves." Another learner said, "You can understand where some people are coming from hitting their kids." Students found "to spank or not to spank" an interesting topic for discussion which led to more discussion about what are good ways to teach your children right from wrong and ways of disciplining without hitting.

Stress

Ann's life is full of stress. She has a son who doesn't like school, a sibling who wants to borrow money, and a boss who want her to work more. She can't sleep, has headaches and turns to junk food for comfort. When Ann asks her friend, Kim, for support, Kim gives her some good advice on how to handle the stress in her life, such as learning how to say 'no,' going for daily walks, and eating good food.

This story generated a lot of discussion about stress in students' lives and healthy ways to deal with stress. A common response to the story was "I have a lot of stress in my life, so I could relate." One student said, "There was some good ideas to make stress go away. The best idea is to say 'no.'"

The Big Goof

Jan is in love with Bill. Jan cooks for Bill, mows his lawn and even washes his car, but Bill doesn't seem to notice. Finally, Bill asks Jan out for coffee.

During their date, Bill talks non-stop about himself, eats like a pig, talks on his cell phone and is mean to the waitress. Jan walks out on Bill. The story ends with the memorable lines, "Jan is happy. But Bill is a big goof."

Some students and instructors thought this book was entertaining, while others thought that it was just silly. Some learners saw a moral in the story: "The book teaches people not to be mean and not to be goofs." One learner saw this lesson in the story: "She walked out on him. That was a good move. More women should do that." In my class, *The Big Goof* opened up the topic of what constitutes "rude behaviour". ◻

Title:	***My Name is Kahentiiosta* (1995)**
Author:	**Alanis Obomsawin, director/producer**
Produced by:	National Film Board of Canada P.O. Box 6100, STN Centre-Ville Montreal, Quebec, H3C 3H5 Toll free: 1-800-267-7710 Fax: (514) 283-7564
Website:	www.nfb.ca
Order No.:	113C9195100
Price:	$39.95

My Name is Kahentiiosta

Reviewed by Richard Van Camp, Instructor and First Nations Resource Member

2001 Governor General's Awards recipient in Visual and Media Arts for Film, Alanis Obomsawin, wrote and directed this National Film Board documentary told by Kahentiiosta, a Mohawk woman and mother who was detained by the provincial police for four additional days because she refused to give anything other than her traditional Mohawk name after the 78 day stand-off at Oka in 1990.

This video was field-tested at Vancouver Community College and at Heiltsuk College here in Bella Bella. Here are some of our student responses. "I felt angry about the white people taking over the sacred ground"; "I felt upset about the violence in the video"; "She is a hero"; "She was right to stay until the very end." Shirley Brown, of Heiltsuk College, wrote: "This documentary made me proud. Kahentiiosta was strong; she stood up and fought for the rights of First Nations, for the land that we own. It gives me the power to feel proud to be First Nations. No matter the struggles Kahentiiosta went through, she stood strong and got what she wanted."

One student from VCC wrote: "Whose land is it anyway? We can't give it back," while another reflected, "It was good to get a different perspective. We certainly saw the government side that summer. I think they did a good job of contrasting the fear and the courage." Obviously, this video will initiate great discussion in any classroom and can be used for a number of subjects.

As an instructor, Jan Weiten's comments were: "powerful video," "the language in the video (is) accessible to our students." She liked the fact that "it shows a woman who is not afraid to stand up for her beliefs" and that students "don't need a lot of background to understand the video" as it is self-explanatory.

My favourite quote in the movie is when Kahentiiosta says, "We didn't lose. The golf course was stopped. I said, 'Look at the pines. They're still there. The cemetery is peaceful again. Our people are resting.'"

This is a powerful video that everyone should see. ❑

Title:	***Curious Creatures Reading Success series* (1997)**		
Author:	**James Robert Taris and Louis James Taris**		
Publisher:	Curriculum Associates, Inc.		
	North Billerica, MA 01862		
	Toll free: 1-800-225-0248 Toll free fax: 1-800-366-1158		
	Email: cainfo@curriculumassociates.com		
Website:	www.curriculumassociates.com		
ISBN/Price:	*Bats*	0-7609-0123-6	$13.45
	Owls	0-7609-0118-X	$13.45
	Snakes	0-7609-0119-8	$13.45
	Spiders	0-7609-0120-1	$13.45
	Wolves	0-7609-0121-X	$13.45
	Teacher's Guide	0-7609-0122-8	$ 5.95
	Starter Pack (includes 5 titles + the Teacher's Guide)		$34.45

Curious Creatures series

Reviewed by Debbie Booth-Johnson, Instructor

This is a series of short non-fiction books about five fascinating creatures: wolves, bats, owls, snakes, and spiders. Each book describes the animal's appearance, habits, habitat, unusual facts and its place in the ecosystem. For example, did you know there is a type of bat with a five foot wing span, or that the orb web of a spider can be up to 19 feet around? The authors also address some of the myths people have about the nature and behaviour of these animals. For example, "Poisonous snakes bite only when they are frightened—and only as their last choice." One student commented, "I feel how much the author loves wolves." The picture of the rusting leg-hold trap on the last page of the book about wolves does evoke strong feelings for some students. Each book ends on a positive note reminding us of the value of each of these creatures to our environment and why they should be protected.

These books are particularly well designed with a good balance of print and excellent nature photography or drawings on each page. The information is presented in plain language that will appeal to most adults. The length, only 16 pages, size of print, vocabulary, and pictures make them very accessible to beginning readers. All the students who have reviewed these books have had very positive comments. They found each of the books informative and interesting — the kind of books they would be willing to read more than once.

The series also includes a teacher's guide. This booklet provides teaching suggestions for each book and reproducible masters: word searches, cloze exercises, matching, and true and false exercises. All the instructors who have used the *Curious Creatures* series have indicated they are a valuable resource in their classrooms. Because of their broad appeal, excellent formatting and useful information, these books would also be appropriate to purchase as multiple copies for class sets. ❑

SAMPLE PAGE
Excerpt from *Wolves* by James Robert Tans and Louis James Tans. © (1997). Curriculum Associates ®, Inc.
Reproduced by permission of the publisher.

Every wolf in the pack has a place, or **rank.** The biggest, strongest male is the pack's leader. This dog is called the alpha male. When another wolf is near, the alpha male carries its tail high in the air to show that he is the leader. The other wolf will often roll over on its back to show it knows its place.

Title:	***Lectra***
Author:	**Michel Brun**
Publisher:	Logiciels Educatifs Brun-Villani, 10 Rue Wilson, 68000 Colmar, France Email: mbrun@hrnet.fr
Website:	http://www.lectramini.com/anglais.htm
Price:	$32.00

Lectra

Reviewed by Evelyn Battell, Instructor

It is hard to find good computer software to teach reading skills to our students. Much of the available software is not interesting to them because it is not written for adults, because it is not Canadian, or because it is written in the context of the white middle class. From France comes *Lectra*, a shareware reading program. It comes with no reading content; you provide the texts, so you can customize it to your students. It consists of a package of exercises that work with any text you enter. You can download a sample from the Internet, and by paying the very low fee, you get access to the instructor's control package; this allows you to track individuals and groups of students.

The program allows beginning level students to read and reread text in many ways on the computer. One instructor noted that it is useful for students with extremely limited vocabulary. Some of the activities are:

- identifying a word from the text when it is flashed on the screen,
- putting words in alphabetical order,
- filling in cloze exercises,
- inserting punctuation or particular parts of speech,
- ordering the words in a sentence,
- completing sentences from a choice of words,
- inserting spaces between words,
- finding words in the text,
- matching words.

As you can see, these are exercises designed to allow students to work with one text in many ways until they begin to be able to read it almost from memory.

The type size and layout of the exercises are good, and the actions with the mouse or space bar are satisfying. In exercises where you can choose the speed, the "fast" button is not so fast that nobody can use it. Students like most of the exercises and develop favourites. If you have set up a program for the student, when

(Continued from page 16)

he signs in, the program suggests that he do certain exercises, but the student can follow the suggestions or not, as he chooses. We got permission from writers and publishers to type in many short texts, the kind of books our students like to read. Many students like to work with the program with the original book handy. They often work and rework the same material until they are getting it all right. There is enough "happening" to keep them engaged, but it is not childish or busy. It is a way to give some very beginning readers a bit of independence from the teacher. Of course, the more material you have typed in, the more choice the students will have and the easier it is to choose material suited to their interests or abilities. In our class, most students simply started at the first passage in the list. This is also an excellent program to use if you are doing language experience. Type the student's story in as she talks, and there are exercises that let her take it apart and put it back together again many times.

There are some difficulties with the program. Entering text is a bit laborious; you have to make the text match the parameters of the program. You couldn't let a student type in his own work without the program producing a number of errors in the use of the text. One short book, such as one of the Grass Roots Press Readers reviewed elsewhere in this bulletin, might all fit in one passage, but even a book with very few words may have to be broken into two passages when entering it.

The translation of the names of exercises is sometimes poor. For example, an exercise that people love, where the sentences come on screen with no spaces, and the student inserts the spaces, is called IFAN. That may stand for something in French, but it means nothing to me. Also the word "Fin" appears at the end of exercises; this could be seen as a chance for students to learn a word in French!

We have not been successful using it in a networked lab. Students' records do not save to their disks, but rather to the hard drive. If students do not sign in, they can use the program, but they do not get the suggested plan of attack, nor can they track their progress from one session to the next. The buttons across the bottom of the screen are tricky in that you often find you get the exercise next to the one you want. This seems to be a problem in the networked lab, not when the program is installed on one computer.

Nonetheless, in a world of few computer programs suited to adult beginning readers, *Lectra* provides a real opportunity. To view this program you simply go to the web address above and download. It comes with a short sample story as text so you can see how the exercises work. If you want to have tracking ability, you send the fee to the address above and the author e-mails you a code to enable the teacher's capabilities. Literacy BC does not have a copy of this program as it is available on the Internet. □

Title:	***Prehistoric Canada* (2000)**
Author:	**Sonja Schild**
Publisher:	Smart Toys
	210—5550 Beresford Street, Burnaby, BC V5J 5G8
	Tel: (604) 433-1347 Fax: (604) 433-2498
	Email: smarttoys@bbr.ca
Website:	www.bbr.ca/smarttoys
Available:	Publisher
ISBN:	0-9684445-1-2
Price:	$24.99

Prehistoric Canada

Reviewed by Rena Neufeld, Instructor

The workbook, *Canada History, Part 1, Prehistoric Canada*, part of the series, *Our Home and Native Land*, covers the prehistoric period of Canadian history from the last Ice Age to the end of the 15th century. The material presented is a portrayal of life before the arrival of Europeans. It is most useful as part of a study of First Nations history and culture.

Rather than a chronological textbook approach, this reproducible workbook provides vignettes of information that seek to paint at least a partial picture of our very early history. Information is presented through the use of very short passages of text. Each page contains several exercises, which range from art projects to fill-in-the-missing-word. Many enrichment activities are suggested, and one instructor found these enrichment projects to be an excellent way to include a local focus.

I like the attention paid to the findings of artifacts and fossils. The students see how historians, using these findings, arrive at their interpretations of history and how our understanding of prehistory is incomplete, at best.

This material is best used as a resource from which the teacher copies specific pages; some students may object to certain exercises and projects that are clearly aimed at young learners. However, the instructors who used this material as a resource found many valuable exercises for their adult students.

Students report that the information is interesting, that the material is easy to read, and that they like the workbook. Instructors appreciate that the concepts are presented at a variety of reading levels, that some of the exercises and map work are quite interesting and challenging, and that a useful glossary is included at the end of the workbook. Also included are eight "History Challenges" that can be used for review or testing.

As with any material that attempts to interpret aboriginal history and culture, teachers would be wise to check the content with local First Nations people.

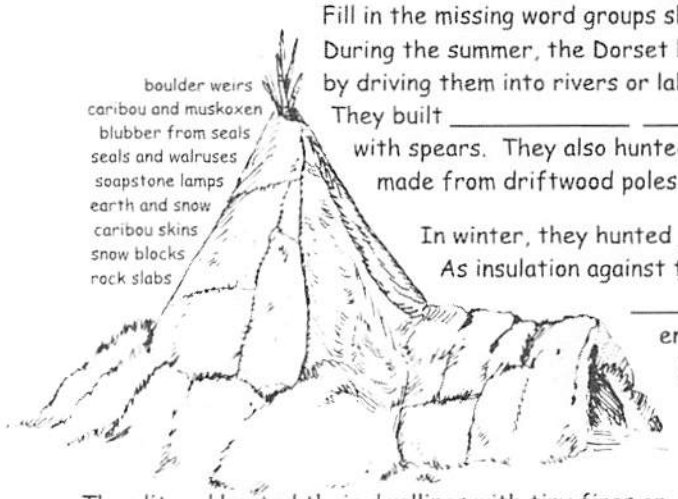
The students and teachers who reviewed this workbook found material which was informative, worthy of discussion or further investigation, and fun! ❑

Name: _____ Date: _____ 8

DORSET PEOPLE

The Dorset People (or Tunit)
migrated into Canada from Alaska about 3000 BC.
They lived across Arctic Canada from about 3000 BC to about 1000 AD.

Below is a description how the Dorset People lived.



Fill in the missing word groups shown in the word bank.

During the summer, the Dorset hunted C_____ _____ _____ by driving them into rivers or lakes and killing them with bows and arrows. They built _____ _____ across rivers, where they caught fish with spears. They also hunted birds with barbed spears. They lived in tents made from driftwood poles covered with C_____ _____.

In winter, they hunted _____ _____ _____. As insulation against the cold, the Dorset covered their tents with _____ _____ _____. They built entrance tunnels of _____ _____ (as shown on the left). Inside the dwelling, they used _____ _____ to build sleeping and working areas.

They lit and heated their dwellings with tiny fires or _____ _____. They used _____ _____ _____ for oil and dried moss for wicks.

The Dorset People left an astounding number and variety of tiny and beautiful carvings and tools. Many of these artifacts were first discovered on Dorset Island, Nunavut, in 1925.

Despite the harsh Arctic environment, the Dorset People survived very successfully in Arctic Canada for 4,000 years. However, about 1,000 years ago, the Dorset People suddenly disappeared. It happened at about the same time that the Thule People migrated from Alaska into Canada!

Do the following on Map #8:

1. Trace the treeline in green.
2. Label the place the Dorset People are named after.
   It is _ _ _ _ _ _ _ Island, Nunavut. Colour it green.
3. Label Port au Choix. Add the 2-digit provincial code.
   It is a historic site and marked with the (H) sign. Colour it red.
4. Qajartalik is marked with a circle. Colour the circle purple.
   Qajartalik is located in the Province of _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

Shown above is the wood carving of a Dorset man. List what he is wearing:

_____
_____
_____

BRAINWORK **MYSTERY:** DISAPPEARANCE OF THE DORSET PEOPLE

Historians have many theories about why the Dorset People disappeared, but they don't really know what happened. What do you think might have happened? Write your own theory on a separate page.

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Title/Price:	***Stress, Anxiety and Depression* (1998)**	**$11.00**
Author:	**Developed by Tara Realini**	
Title/Price:	***Understanding Anger, 2nd edition* (1995)**	**$15.00**
Author:	**Developed by Stan Plett**	
Publisher:	The John Howard Society of Manitoba 583 Ellice Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1Z7 Tel: (204) 775-1514 Fax: (204) 775-1670 Email: office@johnhoward.mb.ca	
Website:	www.johnhoward.mb.ca	
Available:	Publisher	

Stress, Anxiety and Depression, Understanding Anger

Reviewed by Nancy Ross, Instructor

These two workbooks are part of a series of 18 from the John Howard Society that discuss a number of topics, including AIDS, abuse, addictions, food and nutrition, restorative justice, and getting a job. Both the workbooks we field-tested — *Stress, Anxiety and Depression* and *Understanding Anger* — are set up as a number of lessons: each includes a discussion and then an exercise, at an easy (fundamental) level of reading and writing. However, there are no illustrations or pictures.

My students liked these books a great deal. They field-tested *Stress, Anxiety and Depression* by choosing the topic of greatest interest to them. Working in small groups, they read the lessons out loud and then discussed the exercise questions. It was gratifying to see how much discussion the topics inspired. Every student had something to contribute from their personal experience or about someone they knew. Because the discussion was within small groups, they felt safe sharing about these sensitive topics. Every student in the class reported that this book was the best they had ever field-tested!

Understanding Anger was also liked by students. They found that they learned many new things, and that the lessons and exercises were personally relevant to them. "It describes me, and how I am in dealing with someone," and "You should send this out to the schools for all ages, to help out," were typical comments. A common reaction to *Understanding Anger* was that it helped students realize that they were not the only ones who had difficulty coping with stress and reacting without anger.

It is important to warn that both the books contain potentially distressing topics. Make sure that you are comfortable in dealing with the material in each book before using it, whether with an individual or within a class setting. Be prepared for high emotions, and plan for it, such as by having a relaxation session to end, or a time to laugh or unwind. Warn the students ahead of time, to prepare them and give them the option of opting out if they find a topic too intense. However, with preparation, the information students can learn by reading these books is useful, educational, and rewarding. ❑

LESSON #10

Depression

Like anxiety, depression is a normal emotion. As well, like anxiety, depression can become a mental illness. However, it is a treatable illness.

Depression affects people of different gender, race and age. Approximately 1 in 4 women and 1 in 10 men will be diagnosed with depression in their lifetime. No one knows exactly what causes depression. However, it is believed that several factors, such as the ones listed below, may be involved:

- A family history of depression.
- A stressful event.
- The three month period following childbirth.

If you are depressed, it does not necessarily mean that you suffer from depression. Everyone has off days. However, for some people, depression can become a very serious disorder. Depression in this form is an illness, not something that will just go away with positive thinking. Living with depression can be difficult for everyone involved. It is difficult for the sufferer, family members and friends. The exercise on the following page will help you identify if you suffer from depression.

Title:	***The Illuminated Life of Maud Lewis* (1998)**
Author:	**Peter d'Entremont, director/producer**
Produced by:	National Film Board of Canada P.O. Box 6100, STN Centre-Ville Montreal, Quebec, H3C 3H5 Toll free: 1-800-267-7710 Fax: (514) 283-7564
Website:	www.nfb.ca
Order No.:	143C9198013
Price:	$39.95

The Illuminated Life of Maud Lewis

Reviewed by Joyce Cameron, Instructor

This fifty-minute video tells the life story of Maud Lewis, Canada's foremost folk artist. The video focuses on Maud Lewis and uses original photos and film footage, interviews with people who knew her, and actors to depict her arduous but wonderfully creative life. It begins with her pleasant childhood and follows her as she develops her artistic abilities despite the onset of the rheumatoid arthritis that crippled her.

The story is both sad and inspirational. As a young woman, she bore a child, and because she was not married, the doctor and her father told her that it was a stillborn baby boy. The real baby, a healthy girl, was given up for adoption, and Maude was never told about her. It was also sad that her husband, who was devoted to her in some ways, was a miser, and they lived out their lives in a tiny shack without electricity or running water. But the joy in the choice of subjects and strong colours in her paintings are inspiring in and of themselves, and more so when you think of the obstacles that Maud overcame to create them.

Many of Maud's paintings are shown, along with her tiny house that she painted inside and out in the bright, happy colours that characterize her work. There were several things that fascinated all of us as we watched the film: Maud's perseverance despite her severe disability, the amazing little house she and her husband lived in, and the relationship between the two of them.

The students in my class agreed that they would recommend the video. One student from a Victoria READ class said: "I would give four stars to this video. Even though I am not an art admirer myself, it really held my attention all the way through." ❑

THE BULLETIN'S BOARD

Now I Know
Editors: Shelley O'Connor, Dawn Dugandzic, and Lisette Jones.

This 410-page binder full of articles and exercises covers most health issues in our lives such as common ailments, heart and lungs, diseases and chronic care, pregnancy and childcare, emergency care, healthy eating, etc. Many articles are written by people who have experienced health problems. The personal stories are verified by additional factual information. The exercises include comprehension questions, reading between the lines, and vocabulary. At a beginning reading level, it is valuable as a reference in the classroom and to generate class discussions about health issues. The text is accompanied by pencil sketches and lots of white space. The full text is available by downloading from: **http://www.nald.ca/CLR/nowiknow/cover.htm** or for $65.00 from Shelburne County Learning Network, PO Box 209, Shelburne, NS, B0T 1W0.

WWW Sites

Some of us regularly go out on the WWW with our students. We want to share some sites we have enjoyed. We guarantee nothing about these sites except that we have been there and some students have found them interesting.

http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~ileslj/quizzes
A good easy-to-read site for homonyms, scrambled words, and other exercises.

http://www.everwonder.com/david/snakes
A site about - guess what - snakes. Good pictures and interesting facts.

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Literacy BC, Suite 601, 510 West Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1L8
Telephone 1-800-663-1293 toll free in BC or (604) 684-0624 | Facsimile (604) 684-8520.

We would like to hear from you if you have materials to recommend, or requests.

If you would like to recommend some materials, please tell us the title, author and publisher and why you recommend the material. If possible, send us a photocopy of one page and the table of contents.

If you would like us to seek out, field-test and review a certain type of material, please tell us the content, level and format (book, video, software, etc.).

Please send information and questions to:

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Farewell from the Editor

It is time for me to say goodbye to editing the *Literacy Materials Bulletin*. I have been working with this committee for six years; they have been filled with insight and inspiration. Once again I am amazed at the quality and dedication of literacy instructors and it has been an honour to know each member of the committee. I'm passing the editor's hat to Debbie Booth-Johnson who has been a joy to work with and to know. She and May Chan at Literacy BC will now do the guiding and the nitty-gritty; I'm looking forward to the next editions.

Evelyn Battell

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